

Religions of the World

Atheism to Zoroastrianism

By

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About the author

Sharma Sharma is a blogger from India and author of many books. She has Masters in Indian history and religious studies. She has also completed the prestigious University Grants Commission and has a Masters in Business Administration.



She is the author of many books:

[Religions of the World for Kids](#)

[Hinduism For Kids: Beliefs And Practices](#)

[Hindi Language For Kids And Beginners: Speak Hindi Instantly](#)

[Real Ghost And Paranormal Stories From India](#)

[India For Kids: Amazing Facts About India](#)

[Life and Works of Aryabhata](#)

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Introduction

The world has witnessed the birth of several religions over the centuries for the pursuit of truth. The [religions of the world](#) have been classified in several categories namely:

Abrahamic religions

Iranian religions

Indian religions

African religions

East Asian religions

Indigenous ethnic religions

New religious movement

Let's take a look at the religions of the world...

*When I admire the wonders of a sunset or the beauty of the moon,
my soul expands in the worship of the creator.....*

Mahatma Gandhi

*So I say to you, ask and it will be given to you, search, and you
will find, knock, and the door will be opened for you.....*

Jesus Christ

*I love you when you bow in your mosque, kneel in your temple,
pray in your church. For you and I are sons of one religion, and it
is the spirit.....*

Khalil Gibran

Atheism

Atheism is now considered a religion where followers reject the idea of a God or deity. They do not believe in any God. They say that there is no proof of the existence of any God.



Paul Henri Thiry, Baron d'Holbach, the 18th century advocate of atheism

Baha'i

A monotheistic religion with roots in Iran. It was founded by a Persian nobleman called Bahauallah in the 19th century Persia. He taught the unity of all human beings. He said that there is one human race and there is only one God and that all religions of the world shows the different stages of God's desire. The followers of this faith have built excellent temples called the Lotus Temples all over the world. The [Lotus Temple in Delhi](#) is a popular tourist destination in India.



Bahauallah in the front row, third from the left

Buddhism

Buddhism was founded by Siddhartha Gautama commonly known as Buddha in the 6th century in India. A Buddha is someone who has realised the truth. The main aim of the Buddhists is to attain nirvana or complete egolessness.



The Buddha meditating under a tree. He is surrounded by his five disciples.

Candomblé

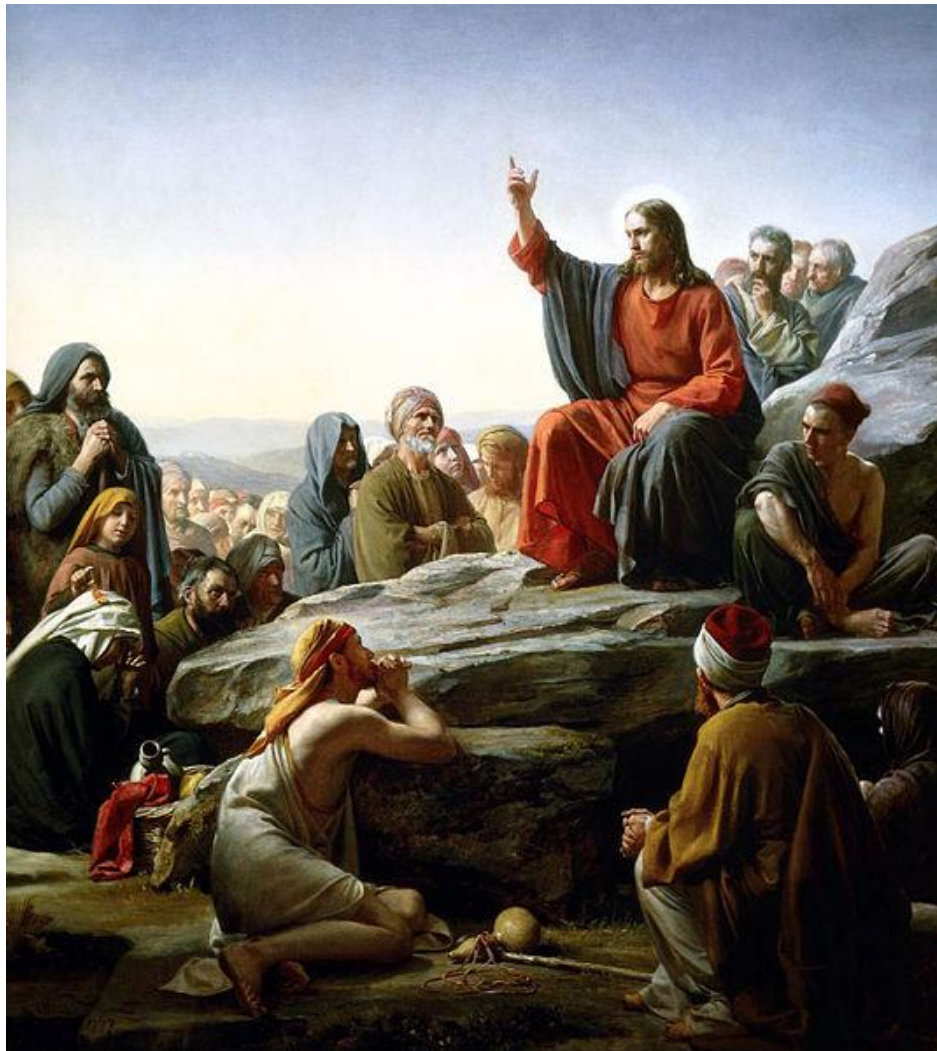
Candomblé is an African American religion practiced mainly in Brazil and other Latin American countries such as including Uruguay, Venezuela, Argentina and Colombia. It began in the 19th century in Salvador during the slave trade. They believe in many Gods and deities that were created by the Supreme God, Olodumar. The deities are link between the spiritual world and the human world.



A Candomblé place of worship called “houses”

Christianity

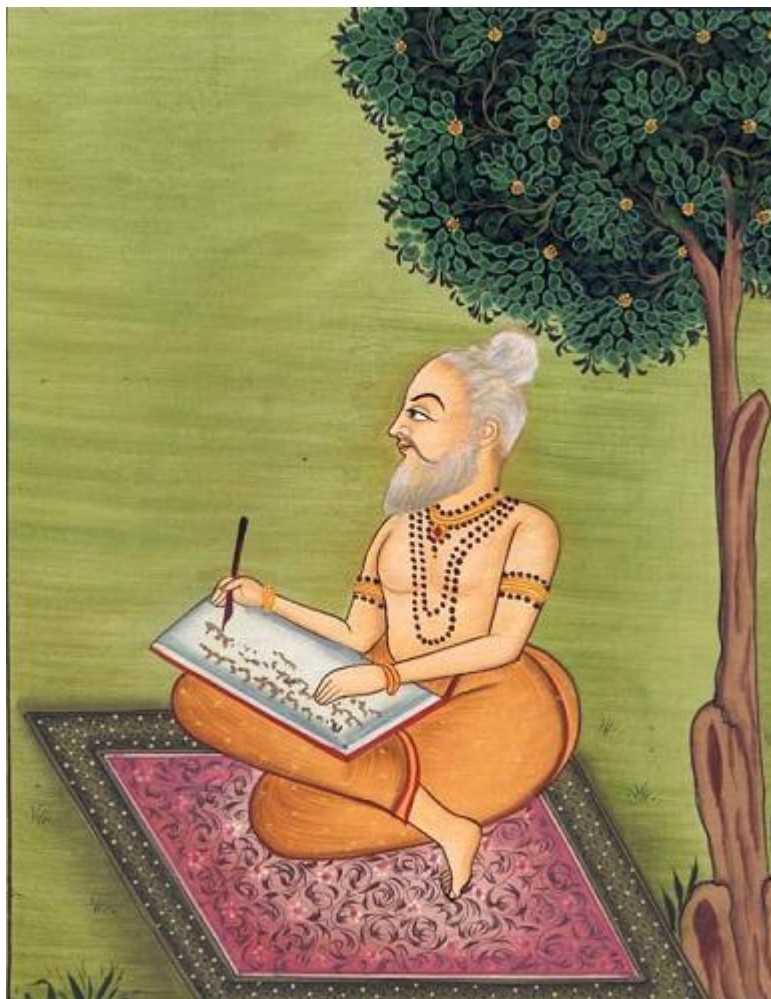
Christianity is the world's biggest religion with over 2.2 billion faithfuls all over the world. The religion is based on the teachings of Jesus Christ of Bethlehem born about 2000 years ago. The Christians believe that Jesus is the messiah sent to earth as mentioned in the Old Testament but they regard him as the son of God. Christians believe in one god but has 3 parts; The Son, The Father and the Holy Ghost. Christmas is celebrated as the birth of Jesus.



Jesus preaching to his disciples

Hinduism

Hinduism is the world's oldest religion. There is no founder of this religion and Hindus consider Hinduism as a way of life. Reincarnation or the recycle of birth is central to the Hindu faith. The aim of the Hindus is to obtain moksha or free from the recycle of birth by doing good deeds. There is only one God in Hinduism called "Brahman" that manifests itself in multiple forms.



Valmiki, the saint who wrote the Ramayana, one of the epics of the Hindu religion

Islam

The followers of Islam call themselves Muslims. Their holy book is called the Quran. They believe in Allah with Mohammad as his last messenger. They believe that verses of the Quran were revealed to Mohammad through the archangel Gabriel in the Arabic language.

The five pillars of Islam include:

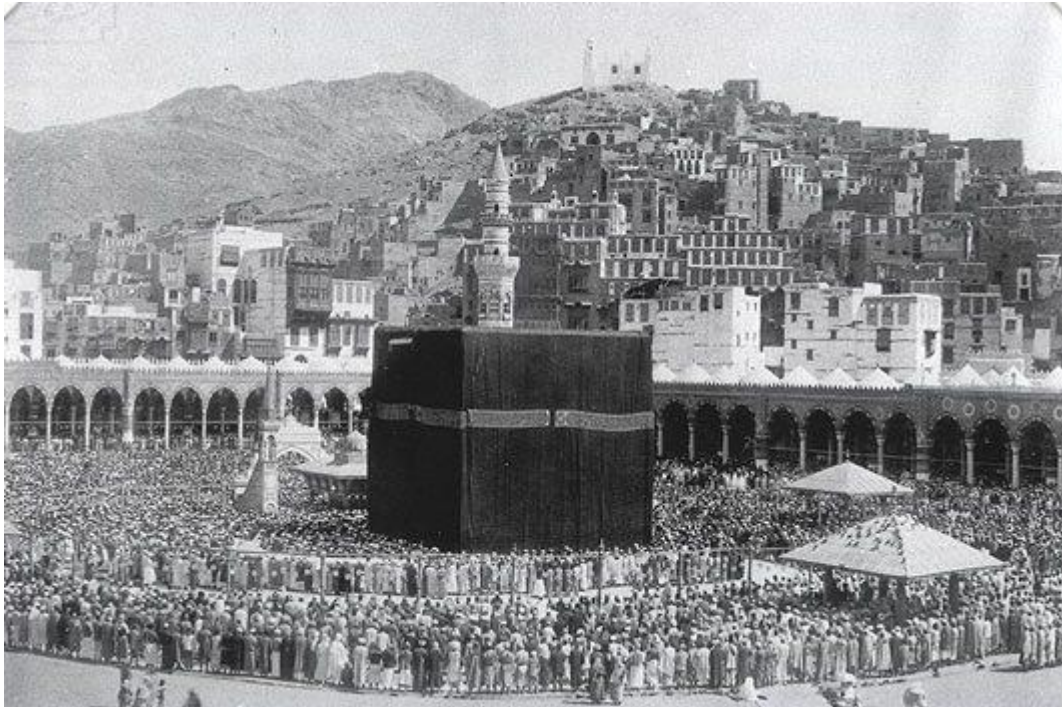
Shahadah: There is no god except Allah and Muhammad is his prophet.

Salat: Praying 5 times a day

Zakat: To give 2.5% of earnings to the poor

Sawm: Fasting during the month of Ramadan

Hajj: Pilgrimage to at least once a life time



The Kaaba in Mecca

Jainism

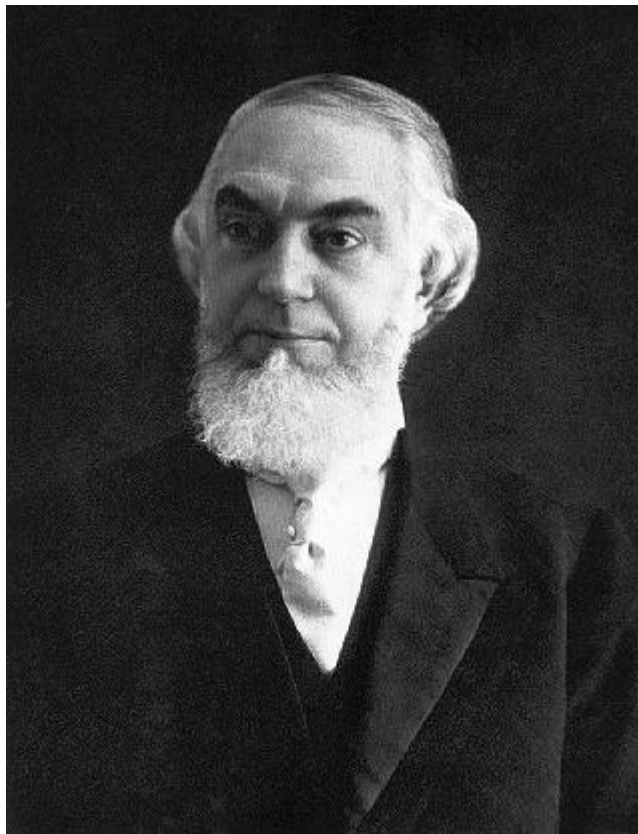
The Jain religion was founded by a succession of twenty-four propagators and Mahavira as the last one that believe in Ahimsa or non-violence against all living things. Jains believe in 5 principles namely; ahimsa (non-violence), satya (truth), asteya (not to take anything that is not willingly given), brahmacharya (control of the senses) and Aparigraha (detachment).



Mahavira

Jehovah's Witnesses

The followers of Jehovah's Witnesses believe that they are different from the mainstream Christian religion. They hold the concept that the destruction of the world is certain and Armageddon is close. The only solution is the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. They are found door to door preaching and distributing leaflets.



The formation of Jehovah's Witnesses emerged after the formation of Bible Student movement on 1870s by Charles Taze Russell.

Judaism

Judaism is one of the oldest religions of the world of more than 3000 years old that has roots in the Middle East. It is a religion, a philosophy and a way of life for the Jewish people. The holy text of the Jews is the Torah also known as the Hebrew Bible. Israel is considered as the Promised Land given to the Jewish people by God. Sadly, about 6 million Jews were killed by Hitler for their beliefs.



Jews praying in a Synagogue

Mormonism

Mormonism was founded by Joseph Smith in the 1820s. It is slightly different to Protestantism. One of the holy texts includes Book of Mormon. The book is about the teachings of the ancient prophets who lived on the American continent around 2200 BC to AD 421. Mormons consider themselves to be Christians.



Joseph Smith's had a vision about God the Father and Jesus Christ

Paganism

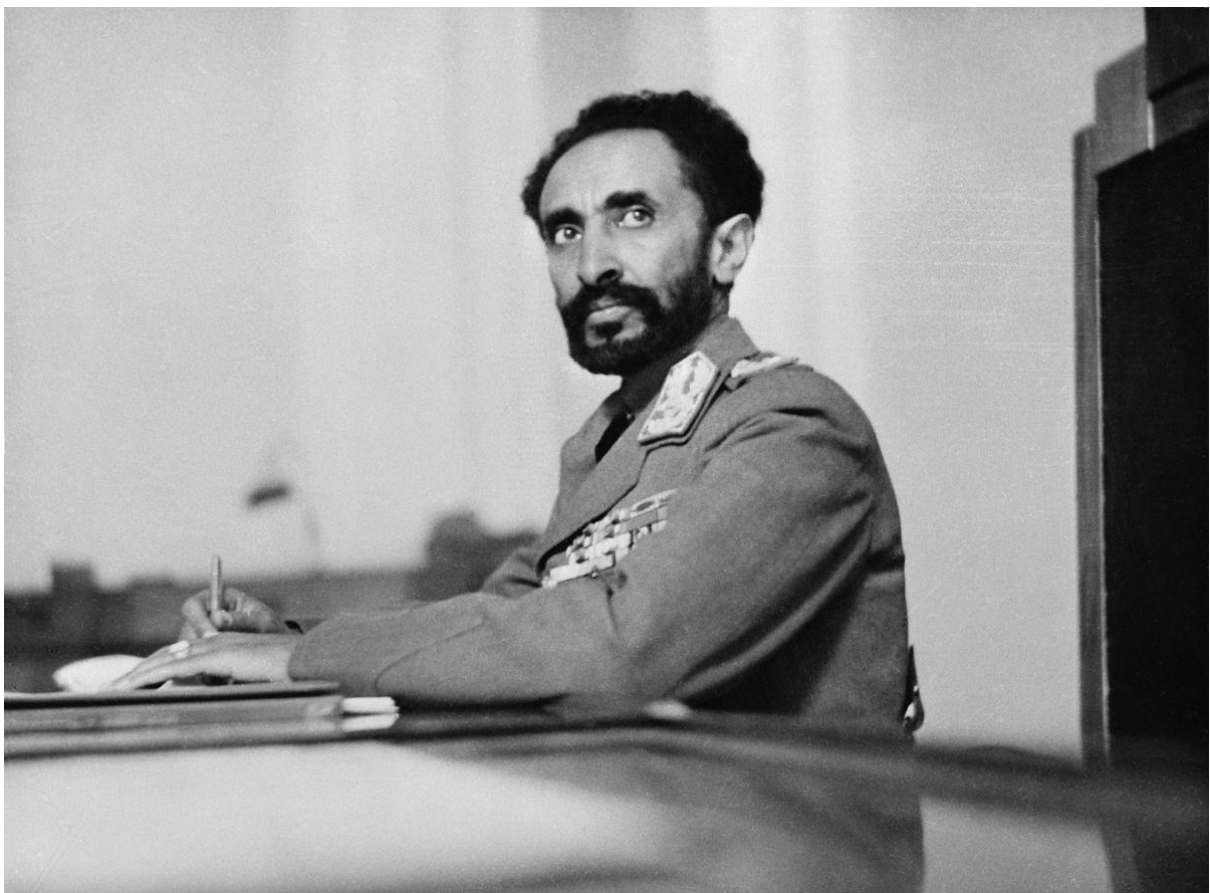
Paganism was the first ethnic or indigenous traditions of many countries of the world. Wiccans, Druids, Odinists, Shamans, Ecologists and Heathens are part of the Pagan community. Today Paganism is on the rise in many countries around the world. They draw inspiration from the natural world that appeals to a lot of people.



Some historians believe that Stonehenge stones have Pagan religious significance

Rastafarianism

The Rastafarian movement started in the 1930s in Jamaica. Their followers consider it a way of life and some call it a religion. The followers consider Haile Selassie I, emperor of Ethiopia as Christ. They believe that he will return to Africa and save them. They also believe that they are the chosen people of Israel. They do not drink alcohol but many consume marijuana to increase spiritual awareness.



The Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia is considered to be Christ

Santeria Religion

This is an African religion of Caribbean origin that developed during the Spanish Empire. This religion is considered as a merger of the Yoruba mythology and customs with Christianity and Indigenous American traditions.



A Santería ceremony. A [creative commons](#) image

Shinto

Shinto or the “Way of the Gods” is an indigenous religion of Japan. The religion is said to be an action centred religion that was founded before Buddhism around 660 B.C. The followers the Shinto Religion is based on the worship of kami or spirits of forces of nature.



Shinto starts in the realm of myth from mythology to historical legends

Sikhism

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in the 15th century in Punjab, India. They believe in ten successive Gurus and the eleventh Guru as the last guru being the holy book called the Guru Granth Sahib. Followers of Sikhism are called Sikhs and the majority of the Sikhs are in the state of Punjab, India.



Guru Nanak

Taoism

Taoism is religion as well as a philosophy of Chinese origin that stresses to live with harmony with Tao or the force that exists behind everything. Tao is not considered as God and is not worshipped. The Yin and Yang is central to Tao belief. Yin and Yang are complementary forces such as light and dark, hot and cold and others.



The symbol of Taoism - Yin and Yang. White represents Yang while the black represents Yin

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism is thought to be one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions that was founded by Zoroaster in ancient Iran approximately 3500 years ago. Zoroastrians believe in a God called Ahura Mazda (or Wise Lord) and consider fire as sacred and something that represents God's light. Their place of worship is called a Fire Temple or Agiary. They are called "Parsis" in India.



Parsis at a wedding

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